

COMMON EVERYDAY OBJECTS

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OBJECTIVE

This is a great game for teaching creative brainstorming while coming up with agreement items. It demonstrates the imaginative power of groups working together and thinking outside the box. It also encourages detachment from the final outcome and creates an environment where no one's idea is turned down.

MATERIALS

One "common everyday object" per group. Objects can be anything: a coffee cup, straw, pencil, paperclip, fork, etc.

INSTRUCTIONS

Divide students into groups of 4–8 people. You need to have at least two groups. The more groups you have, the longer the game will take. Give each group a different "common everyday object," and instruct them to designate one member as the scribe. The groups will have two minutes to brainstorm every function their object could be used for, except its intended purpose (i.e., imagine everything that can be done with a pen other than writing). Everyone in the group contributes to brainstorming as many ideas as possible, and the scribe records all ideas. You cannot repeat different versions of the same idea (i.e., the pen cannot be used as "1. A straw" and "2. To drink with"). The facilitator starts and stops the clock, adding a countdown at the end to increase the intensity and fun. The facilitator then goes group by group, asking the scribe to share what their object is, and to read off all the ideas they listed. The facilitator plays the part of the judge and rules out any repetitions or anything too close to the object's intended use. The group with the most approved ideas wins!

DEBRIEF

What did you notice about brainstorming in a group? How did ideas evolve? Did anyone hold back something they were thinking? Why? How does this relate to brainstorming agreement items in a restorative process?

LESSON

Through healthy competition and playfulness, this game gives learners a taste of what can happen when every person contributes to brainstorming agreements in a restorative process. It creates a spirit of “yes and,” which builds momentum and highlights how unrestricted group brainstorming draws out more creative, inventive ideas from each individual. Students learn that even if they feel shy or insecure about their own ideas, they are valuable to share as they will often stimulate more contributions from others.